

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listing, of claims in the application.

1-50. (Canceled)

51. (Currently Amended) A method of operating a computer system, the method comprising:

receiving a request for an authentication at a microcontroller included in a bridge ~~[[from]]~~

over a bus external to the bridge from a source remote from the computer system;

requesting security data from a security device;

receiving the security data from the security device at the microcontroller;

evaluating the security data; and

approving the authentication at the microcontroller responsive to the security data being evaluated as acceptable.

52. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 51, further comprising:

disapproving the authentication at the microcontroller responsive to the security data being evaluated as unacceptable.

53. (Original) The method of claim 51, wherein evaluating the security data comprises requesting an indication of acceptability inside SMM.

54. (Original) The method of claim 51, wherein requesting security data from a security device comprises requesting the security data from the security device over a direct connection between the security device and the microcontroller; and wherein receiving the security data from the security device, at the microcontroller, comprises receiving the security data from the security device over the direct connection to the microcontroller.

55. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 51, wherein requesting security data from a security device comprises requesting biometric data from a biometric device; wherein receiving the security data from the security device, at the microcontroller, comprises receiving the biometric data from the biometric device, at the microcontroller; wherein evaluating the security data comprises evaluating the biometric data; and wherein approving the authentication responsive to the security data being evaluated as acceptable comprises approving the authentication responsive to the biometric data being evaluated as acceptable.

56. (Currently Amended) A method of operating a computer system, the method, comprising:

receiving a request for an authentication at a microcontroller included in a bridge from a bus external to the bridge from a source remote from the computer system via a controller included in the bridge, the controller being configured to provide access to a bus internal to the bridge;

requesting security data from a security device;

receiving the security data from the security device at the microcontroller;

evaluating the security data; and

approving the authentication at the microcontroller responsive to the security data being evaluated as acceptable.

57. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 56, further comprising disapproving the authentication at the microcontroller responsive to the security data being evaluated as unacceptable.

58. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 56, wherein evaluating the security data comprises the step of requesting an indication of acceptability inside SMM.

59. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 56, wherein requesting security data from a security device comprises requesting the security data from the security device over a direct connection between the security device and the microcontroller; and wherein receiving the security data from the security device, at the microcontroller, comprises receiving the security data from the security device over the direct connection to the microcontroller.

60. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 56, wherein requesting security data from a security device comprises requesting biometric data from a biometric device; wherein receiving the security data from the security device, at the microcontroller, comprises receiving the biometric data from the biometric device, at the microcontroller; wherein evaluating the security data comprises evaluating the biometric data; and wherein approving the authentication

responsive to the security data being evaluated as acceptable comprises approving the authentication responsive to the biometric data being evaluated as acceptable.

61. (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium encoded with instructions that, when executed by a computer system, performs a method for operating the computer system, the method comprising:

receiving a request for an authentication at a microcontroller included in a bridge ~~[[from]]~~
over a bus external to the bridge from a source remote from the computer system
via a controller included in the bridge;
requesting security data from a security device;
receiving the security data from the security device at the microcontroller;
evaluating the security data; and
approving the authentication at the microcontroller responsive to the security data being
evaluated as acceptable.

62. (Previously Presented) The computer readable medium of claim 61, the method further comprising disapproving the authentication at the microcontroller responsive to the security data being evaluated as unacceptable.

63. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 61, wherein evaluating the security data comprises requesting an indication of acceptability inside SMM.

64. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 61, wherein requesting security data from a security device comprises requesting the security data from the security device over a direct connection between the security device and the microcontroller; and wherein receiving the security data from the security device, at the microcontroller, comprises receiving the security data from the security device over the direct connection to the microcontroller.

65. (Previously Presented) The computer readable medium of claim 61, wherein requesting security data from a security device comprises requesting biometric data from a biometric device; wherein receiving the security data from the security device, at the microcontroller, comprises receiving the biometric data from the biometric device, at the microcontroller; wherein evaluating the security data comprises evaluating the biometric data; and wherein approving the authentication responsive to the security data being evaluated as acceptable comprises approving the authentication responsive to the biometric data being evaluated as acceptable.